

# RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

COME NOW, AND LET US REASON TOGETHER.—ISAIAH 1. 18.

EDITED BY REV. R. CARRIQUE.—PUBLISHED BY AN ASSOCIATION OF GENTLEMEN.

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[NO. 10.]

The following is from the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, a paper recently published in Buffalo, (N. Y.) and edited by the REV. THOMAS GROSS.

To the Editor of the Gospel Advocate.

Dear Sir,—If you think proper, I wish you to answer the following queries with some remarks.

Query 1. Does the existence of truth ever depend upon our faith or belief of it? Query 2. Can our unbelief of truth destroy it, or make it void? Query 3. If the existence of truth does not depend on faith; nor the destruction of truth on unbelief; why is the former so highly recommended and the latter so universally discarded?

I have thought that a clear elucidation of the above Queries might be of great benefit; especially, as it appears to me, that there ever has been a misunderstanding in regard to these points.

CYRUS.

## ANSWER TO CYRUS' QUERIES.

1. Does the existence of truth ever depend upon our faith or belief of it? Answer, no, and for this reason, because the truth believed, always exists *before* that belief. Truth, in all cases, is prior to faith; and if so it does not depend on faith. The existence of truth antecedent to faith, is a demonstration that truth can exist without faith, and that it always does and will so exist till faith be exercised. Take some examples. The resurrection of Christ was a truth, which existed antecedent to the faith of any one concerning it. It was a truth before any one knew it, and, consequently, did exist independently of faith. The existence of God was prior to all faith in that existence, and for that reason not dependent on faith. Thus of all truth and in all cases, as it is prior to faith; it follows that its existence is not dependent on faith.

Query 2. Can our unbelief of truth destroy it, or make it void? Answer, no. Did the unbelief of the disciples destroy the truth of the resurrection? No. Does the unbelief of men destroy the truth of the divine existence? No. Can it do this? Can it effect any alteration or change of it? It cannot, nor can it effect any alteration or change in any other truth. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith (faithfulness of God) without effect? *Megento*, God forbid.—In brief, if truth be not dependent on faith for its existence; it cannot, for the same reason, be destroyed by unbelief.

Query 3. If the existence of truth does not depend on faith; nor the destruction of truth on unbelief; why is the former so highly recommended and the latter so universally discarded? Answer, 1. *Faith is a reasonable act of believing the truth upon sufficient evidence; unbelief is an unreasonable act of disbelieving, with the same evidence.* Now as one is a reasonable and the other an unreasonable act; the first must be praiseworthy; the latter criminal; and for this reason, one is recommended, and the other discarded.

2. Faith in the truth is recommended and unbelief discarded, because the former acknowledges God's veracity; the latter makes God a liar. Faith or belief in the truths of the gospel, is an acknowledgment that God is true; but unbelief withholds from God the truth and charges him with falsehood. Thus the former is to be recommended, the latter to be disapproved.

3. Faith brings the believer, to the enjoyment of what he

believes, and so is to be recommended; but unbelief is a *bar to that enjoyment*; and for that reason, is reprehended. He that believes enters, immediately, into rest; by seeing and having a foresight and an anticipation of what will be revealed; he rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory; but he is far from rest and is a stranger to this joy, who disbelieves. He remains in darkness and is a stranger to happiness by unbelief.

4. Faith is enjoyed and unbelief disallowed, because, the former excites to obedience; the latter to sin. Faith works by love. It purifies the heart. It overcomes the world. But unbelief gives the enemy all the advantage, which he desires. It is connected with discouragement and despair. Faith enables the believer to run the christian race with joy; unbelief is inconsistent both with the christian race, and the joy with which that race is performed. Thus these four reasons make it plain, why faith is recommended, and unbelief discarded.

We now apply this to the gospel call.—We are called upon, by the gospel, to believe. We exhort one another to believe, and we have been, and still are, by preachers of all denominations, called upon to believe. So far they have been consistent. It is our duty to believe. But the question now is *what* must we believe? The belief, that Jesus is the son of God; that he died for sinners; that he is a Saviour to none but such as are his by performing conditions of salvation, and that faith is one of those conditions; this belief is the faith which is generally described. But this faith may be exercised while he, who exercises it, may be as ignorant of the gospel as he ever was, and be as destitute of its joy. Our subject makes that clear, which we are to believe.—*Something is to be believed, which is a truth before we believed it; which is unchangeably sure and certain; and that which is infinitely to our advantage.* This something, be it what it may; attended with the security mentioned and comprehending our infinite advantage, is the truth to be believed. It does exist, or it is not a truth, and if not a truth, we could not be called upon to believe. Now what is this truth. It is this, that God has given us eternal life and that this life is in his Son. This is the truth, which, being full of everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, is not dependant on our faith, because it was prior to it; nor can it be destroyed by unbelief, because God has made it immutable. This, then, is the truth to be believed, viz. that God has given to the person, who is required to believe, and who is now an unbeliever, *eternal life*, and that this is immutable, because it is in his Son. We may now see, what the gospel calls us to believe. It is truth, no way dependant on our faith, because it was before it; and that, which unbelief can never destroy, because it is the gift of eternal life.—This gift is not consequential on faith, as we have been, and still are taught; but it is the truth existing before faith, and faith in it is required because it does exist.

Hence it is plain, that as all men are required to believe the gospel, which contains the certain news of eternal life; so it follows that the news of eternal life, is true respecting all men, existing antecedently to their faith in it, and that they are required to believe it, because it is true.—On no other principle, could an unbeliever make God a liar, than by disbelieving what God has declared to be truth.

Thus I have answered the queries contained in your communication as briefly as I could; together with an ap-

plication of it in the universal call to believe the gospel: viz, that whatever we are required in the gospel, to believe; was a truth before we believed it, and before the requirement was made: that the truth which the gospel contains, as it existed antecedently to faith; so it does not depend on faith for its existence, nor can it be destroyed or altered by our unbelief. The important consequences deducible from the above replies, we shall reserve for some future number.—*Editor.*

### COMMUNICATIONS.

#### FOR THE INQUIRER

*To the Rev. MOSES THACHER, Attleboro', (Mass.)*

Rev. Sir,—Being confined to the fireside by the inclemency of the weather, I take the liberty of addressing a few lines to you, on the discourse which you delivered yesterday from the words of the Apostle,

“We use great plainness of speech.”

After a number of prefatory remarks, the general tenor of which went to prove that faithful ministers of the gospel would always declare the whole counsel of God. You proceeded to state that the gospel was a scheme or system of *doctrines and duties*,—and you observed in your enumeration that one of these doctrines was the *total depravity* of all mankind. And that another was the *UNCONDITIONAL REPROBATION* of a PART of them to endless misery. You further remarked respecting the *DUTIES* enjoined by the gospel, that those of repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, were required of *ALL* men; which suggested to my mind the two following queries.

1st. If as you stated it be true, that all mankind are totally depraved, how can they exercise the duties of faith and repentance? 2d. If they could perform this impossibility, what benefit would result to that PART, which is unconditionally reprobated to endless misery.

There appears to me, to be some little difference in the definition of the term *gospel*, given by the Apostle from whose writings you selected your text in his epistle to the Galatians, and that contained in your sermon. The Apostle says, “the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached, before, the *gospel* unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed,” and this accords perfectly with what the Angel said, when announcing to the shepherds the birth of the Saviour of the world, “Behold I bring you good tidings of great *joy* which shall be to *ALL* people.”

ABIJAH M. IDE.

Feb. 24, 1823.

#### REMARKS.

We have an evidence in Mr. Thachers preaching, of the mode of instruction pursued in the Calvinistic school. Mr. T. is a young man just appearing in the ministry, with the full assurance that Calvinism is the doctrine of the Bible, and with perfect confidence in his ability to defend it. Mr. T. must be entirely ignorant of the present state of the human mind, the spirit of enquiry that is abroad, and the disposition which exists to examine and to judge each for himself on the sentiments that are advanced from the pulpit. The day is gone past in which ministers could advance without fear of contradiction, what sentiment they chose, however inconsistent and absurd.

If the gentleman is not ignorant of this state of things, he must have great confidence in his own abilities and power for defending his favorite theory. The opportunity is thus early afforded him, of bringing the strength of his mind, and the soundness of his doctrine to the test, and if he is successful, he can then without fear of difficulty go on in his system of contradiction, and have just ground to charge those who do not believe it as being “destitute of *COMMON SENSE*.” If he fails in his attempt to reconcile,

his *DOCTRINE* and *DUTIES*, so that they shall be in agreement one with the other, and to make consistent his idea of *UNCONDITIONAL* reprobation to eternal misery, with the salvation of the reprobate through faith and repentance; or should he consider it the safest way to pay no attention to the request of our friend: we would advise him to learn from the experience of his elder brethren in the ministry, that it is not expedient in the present day to “use great plainness of speech” in preaching Calvinism; that it is best to soften it down as much as possible, or in other words to gild the bait, that its absurdities shall not be discovered until it is too late to retreat. It is probable, that it may be with Mr. T. as was noticed by an aged and experienced Doctor of Divinity, who perhaps understood human nature as well as any other man. Being asked to explain some abstruse and mystical point belonging to Calvinism, he shrewdly observed; I can give you very little information on the subject, but if you will go to some young clergyman just beginning to preach, he will tell you; for he will know all about it.

EDITOR.

#### FOR THE INQUIRER.

*To the Hon. Judge GOODALE, of Bernardston, (Mass.)*

Dear Sir,—I learn, with much satisfaction, that you receive with complacency my former letter addressed to you. This encourages me to offer, for your consideration, a few thoughts on the general doctrine of the sacred scriptures, wherein I hope to show that we virtually agree in the universality of salvation. We, and almost all professed Christians, agree in the belief that all mankind will be raised from the dead, at the last day. Therefore, if we can prove that to be thus raised from the dead is to be saved, the work is done, and we are all universalists. Permit me then to adduce those passages of scripture which, I think, do in fact prove this point. John vi. 39, “And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” On this text the following question arises:—What is the reason that nothing, which the Father hath given to Christ, will be lost? This question is answered, by Christ himself, in the text; and the reason why he will lose nothing, is, because he will raise it up again at the last day. It follows, therefore, that to be raised up by Christ, at the last day, is to be saved at the last day; and, if all that he raises up, at the last day, will be saved, the whole human family will be saved, or we are all wrong in believing that the whole human family will be raised up. That we are not wrong in believing that all mankind will be raised up at the last day, and that we are not wrong in believing, that if they are raised up, they will be saved, may further appear by the following concurrent passages of scripture.—Rev. x. 5, 6, 7,—The angel swears that “There shall be time no longer, but, in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, [the last trump] the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.” Question,—What is the mystery of God, of which the angel speaks, that is to be finished at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet? It is that all things shall be restored. See Acts 3. 21. It is that all things shall be gathered together in one in Christ. See Eph. 1. 10. In the first passage referred to, St. Peter says, “The times of the restitution of all things” is what “God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets.” It is, therefore, the *mystery*, the fulfilment of which, at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, the angel says, God “hath declared by his servants the *prophets*.” In the passage quoted from Eph. St. Paul expressly states, that the gathering together of all things in Christ, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, is the *mystery* of God’s will, which he had made known to him and his brethren; and he agrees with St. Peter, with the angel, and with Christ, that this mystery is to be fulfilled at the last period of time. One of them says, “in the days of the voice of the seventh angel.” Another says, “in the dispen-



sation of the fulness of times." A third says, "the times of the restitution of all things." A fourth, which is Christ, says, "at the last day." The same idea is often repeated by the apostles. For instance see 1 Cor. 15th 51, 52, "behold I show you a *mystery*: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." When? At the *last trump*: for the trumpet [the seventh and last] shall sound, and the *dead shall be raised*. How shall they be raised? Ans. They shall be raised "incorruptible." By what power? Ans. By Christ: he is "the resurrection and the life:"—"as in Adam all die, even so, in Christ, shall all be made alive." Here is a very good reason why nothing will be lost, being raised up, at the last day. And what is it? Ans. It is this:—Christ, "the resurrection and the life," is a Saviour; and, being a Saviour, to be raised in him is to be saved. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature;" and, as all who die in Adam are to be made alive in him, all who die in Adam will be new creatures in the resurrection, at the last day. Therefore, although "we shall not all sleep, we shall all be changed, at the last trump," being raised from the dead in Christ. Is there any intimation in the scriptures that at, or after the last day, when "all things both in heaven and on earth shall be gathered together in one in Christ," they shall be separated again, and a part be banished from his presence? Ans. Not a syllable to this effect. Do we not therefore, my respected friend, do we not virtually agree in the doctrine of universal salvation? Do we not agree that all mankind will be raised in Christ, the Saviour, at the last day? If so, what remains to forbid our acknowledging each other as brothers in the same faith? I mean all professing christians who acknowledge the universal resurrection of the dead? I submit this question, and the above remarks, and quotations of sacred writ, to your consideration, in the most cordial friendship.

JOHN BROOKS.

FOR THE INQUIRER.

### THE MORALITY OF THE GOSPEL; OR THE IMMORAL TENDENCY OF CALVINISM.

NO. 3.

Having in our last number examined the Calvinistic doctrine of original sin, and pointed out the pernicious and immoral tendency of it, we will devote the present to a view of its kindred doctrine of *total depravity*. The notion of an entire moral depravement of the human species, appears to be a consequence of that of original sin; the one is the cause and the other the effect: From the first transgression the moral nature of man, it is said was entirely changed, and from perfect purity became wholly corrupt. This is what is commonly called the *fall* of man; and if such was the nature of it, it was a fall indeed. But we do not intend to examine the considerations upon which it is attempted to support the doctrine in question, or to shew that it is entirely unsupported, either by scripture or reason; we propose only to consider what this famous article of calvinistic faith is, and the influence which it must have upon morals and religion if fully believed in.

As Christ told his disciples, "ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," so it may be said at the present day of the mass of mankind, you know not what you believe. How great a proportion of those who profess to believe in the orthodox doctrines of the church, have any distinct understanding of those doctrines? We speak of those which are not in themselves incomprehensible. How many is there of those who profess to be calvinists who know what they believe when they assent to the doctrine under consideration, although it forms one of the fundamental articles of the creed they have embraced?

What is this celebrated doctrine of total depravity? and what would be its influence, if fully believed in, on the conduct of mankind? It teaches that by the first trans-

gression, the moral constitution of man became wholly and totally depraved and corrupted, so that in his natural state he has not one particle of goodness in him, and can neither conceive or do any thing which is acceptable to God or conformable to the principles of moral rectitude. It teaches that the moral sense of the human species is entirely perverted and depraved, and that we are incapable of any just moral perceptions and distinctions.

It is apparent that the notion of the total depravement of the moral faculties of man, takes away entirely his moral capacity, or at least his capacity to act otherwise than as a depraved moral agent. The only difference between an entire depravement of the moral powers, and the annihilation of them, is, that in the former case man has a capacity to do evil, and in the latter he has no capacity to act at all. This doctrine therefore places mankind in a much worse situation than they would be if deprived of all moral powers, inasmuch as it is better to have no capacity of action, than to have only a capacity to act wrong. As we cannot have so clear an idea of the moral as of the natural faculties, it may aid our conceptions by applying this doctrine to the latter. The eye is the primary organ of sense, and is the principal inlet to the mind. The extinguishment of this organ or the loss of sight is universally admitted to be the greatest calamity; but the total perversion or depravement of this faculty, would be an infinitely greater evil than the privation of it. If the eye presented only false images and objects, we should be constantly in a state of difficulty and perplexity. We should be literally in a world of fallaciousness and illusion; nothing would be real, but every object around us, false and deceptive. Like the traveller in Egypt or Arabia, who parched with thirst, sees at a distance, the illusive gleams of immense lakes of water, which as he approaches them are suddenly transformed into boundless fields of sand, we should be constantly allured by fallacious objects which would elude our pursuit and disappoint our hopes. If we asked for an egg we should receive a stone; if we reached forth our hand to pick up a stick, we might seize a serpent. If the vision did not present objects truly, we should be constantly led into error, and instead of being surrounded by realities should live in a world of illusion, which would be like a haunted castle of the age of knight errantry. All material objects and the world we inhabit, would be like the illusive creations of a dream, unreal, fallacious, & deceptive. Ignorance is preferable to error, and it is better that the visible world should be a universal blank, than that all its objects be entirely deceptive and fallacious.

But the idea of a totally perverted and depraved sense, is too absurd to be seriously considered; yet it is not more absurd than the notion of a total depravity of the moral sense, and faculties. What a wretched and miserable being is man according to this dogma of the church! He possesses moral faculties which from the very nature of them, place him under an inevitable necessity to sin. He is like a damaged clock, which if it runs at all, can only go wrong. But what kind of being is that, whose moral faculties are totally depraved? Would not the entire depravement and corruption of the moral faculties of man, wholly change his nature? He could no longer be man, but a being entirely different. The means or causes by which a person has acquired a certain moral constitution if he has had no agency in them, are not material. He cannot act any more than he can *act* contrary to his nature. According to this dogma of calvinism, man has no moral capacity, to do good, and not only so, but from the depravity of his nature, he is under an *inevitable necessity*, of doing evil. Yet we are told by the same system that he is a free moral agent and responsible for his conduct. How a being who has no capacity to do good, and who from his own depraved nature, is under the necessity of doing evil, can be held responsible for his conduct by a just and merciful God, is an enigma to the eye of reason, and can only be solved by recourse to mystery. A just God holds man res-

possible for moral rectitude, which his depraved faculties render it impossible he should observe. He is required to do, and is to be punished for not doing those things which he has no power to perform, and which are directly opposed to his own nature. He is exhorted to render acceptable services to his God when from his depraved nature he has no ability to act in conformity to the divine will. While he is declared to be so totally corrupt that there is no goodness in him and that he is wholly inclined to evil, he is commanded to purify his own moral constitution, and rectify his depraved moral faculties. What is this, short of creating himself anew; and the same power which could do this might have produced an original creation. This could only be done by Almighty power. The Egyptians were called hard task masters, because they compelled the Israelites to make brick without straw, but the Almighty according to school divinity requires his creature not only to do that which they have no power of doing, but which is directly opposed to their own nature. What would be the thought of a parent who should bind a child hand and foot, and then inform him that his house was full of every thing necessary to his comfort, and invite him to rise and partake freely; and to follow his invitation by his authority and command him to do so, and in case of his not complying, to cast him off forever, for his obstinacy and disobedience of so kind and reasonable a parent? Would it not be thought that such a parent was insane? Yet such is the character which the orthodox give to a God of infinite justice and goodness.

It is a counterpart of this wonderful notion of total depravity that the moral nature of man must be renovated by divine grace. There is certainly wisdom in this; first to create the disease and then prescribe the remedy; these spiritual physicians have a great advantage over the sons of Æsculapius. But the authors of this wonderful scheme are entitled to credit for consistency in these two parts of it, for if the moral powers of man are totally depraved and wholly inclined to sin, it requires a complete and entire renovation of those powers to prepare him for a life of holiness and happiness. But this notion of a renovation of the moral faculties is equally inconsistent with the idea of man's being a moral agent and responsible for his conduct as its kindred faith of total depravity. If it requires an entire renovation of the moral nature of man to fit him for moral rectitude and holiness, upon what principle can he be regarded as a free moral agent, or held responsible for his conduct previous to such renovation?

It can hardly be necessary to inquire what must be the practical moral influence of such principles as these upon the conduct of mankind. If they have no moral capacity to do good but are entirely inclined to evil, that makes an end of the matter. Such principles not only destroy all motives to moral rectitude, but they go an important step farther and take away the power. Those who believe in these sentiments must believe that they are wholly destitute of all capacity for virtuous actions and are entirely inclined to evil. They must view themselves as entirely impotent, regard their moral faculties as prostrate, and feel that they are wholly incapable of any goodness in and of themselves.—That all that remains for them, is to wait for relief from divine mercy and grace, to raise them from their deplorable condition, renew their faculties and prepare them for moral purity. And can persons who consider themselves as thus impotent and depraved, incapable of any goodness, compelled to sin from an inevitable necessity, feel that they are accountable beings? Can they really believe that they are to be punished for not doing what it is impossible for them to do? Will not such principles lead their votaries to be careless as to their conduct, and trust wholly to the saving goodness of God? If you could persuade a man that he had lost his legs would he attempt to walk? And will those who believe that they have lost their moral faculties attempt to exercise them, or to become rich in righteousness of their own? Is it not the influence of such

principles, that lead persons to despise good works and self-righteousness and to trust wholly to the righteousness of Christ?  
T.

## RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

SATURDAY, March 22, 1823.

### BISHOP—THE MISSIONARY.

A few days since we received through the medium of the Post-Office, the NORWALK GAZETTE, of Feb. 26. On examining the columns of the Gazette we found an endeavor to palliate and excuse the conduct of Mr. Bishop in regard to his taking the whip of Major Spurr of Charlton, instead of his own.

The editor of the Gazette, speaks of certain public journals, the editors and supporters of which make great exertions to prejudice the public mind against those, whom he says, are engaged in the benevolent and glorious work of evangelizing the heathen. "To accomplish their unworthy ends," he adds, "they are of course compelled to adopt unworthy means, and such means too as might be supposed any man of common honesty would be ashamed to use."

Here is a heavy charge, of "DISHONESTY" brought by this editor, against every person who does not believe in the utility of Missionary societies as they are at present conducted, and who cannot conscientiously aid, assist, or give encouragement to the missionary scheme. It is to be taken for granted, because a few interested men have set the thing a going, that these missions are the offspring of true genuine benevolence, and christian Philanthropy, perfectly consistent with every principle of moral honesty, and our bounden duty to support them without attempting to examine into their nature and tendency, or of being fully satisfied as to the benefits to be derived from them. If we find by examination that we ought not to give them countenance and support, and dare to speak our minds, we are, at one fell sweep, denounced as 'dishonest.' These are high charges; but knowing the spirit from whence they proceed, we value them accordingly.

But what are the unworthy means, of which a man of common honesty would be ashamed, and of which the editor of the Gazette complains? Ans. An article appeared in the Universalist Magazine published in Boston, giving an account of Mr. Bishop a Missionary, who on his journey from Boston to join the mission family in New-Haven, took a whip from the house of Major Spurr in Charlton, which was not his own, and which transaction was attended with circumstances calculated to produce the belief that it was done designedly; Mr. Bishop's whip being a common walnut handle, with a small lash which he acknowledged cost ONE SHILLING, while Mr. Spurr's was a wound, loaded whale bone whip valued at THREE DOLLARS. The circumstances attending the transaction were taken by HERMES from the lip of Mr. Spurr, and by him handed to the editors of the Magazine, who were well assured of the truth of the article before they published it. This article it is true has been copied into several papers, whose editors have no very favorable opinion of Missions, but that either they, or the editors of the Magazine were governed by unworthy feelings, and have done that of which an honest man would be ashamed, remains to be proved.

After inserting in the Gazette the article, relating to Mr. Bishop and the whip; the editor makes the following remarks.

"Although it would be difficult to induce any candid person to give credit to the above high coloured narration of a mere accidental occurrence, yet as by it a death-blow is aimed at the character of Mr. Bishop, and as the publication was delayed until he was out of the country and thereby incapable of defending himself against the mis-



representations contained in it, we have thought proper to publish the following plain statement of the facts, related by the Rev. Mr. Nash himself, in a letter to a friend in this town. We believe that Mr. Nash is entitled to full as much credit as an *anonymous* writer.

It is true that Mr. Bishop took Mr. Spurr's whip in exchange for his own, and it is also true that the exchange was accidental, and owing to the removal of his baggage from the room in which it was first placed to that from which the whip was taken, but it is *false* that 'Spurr's whip was loaded,' as above stated. 'While it must be admitted,' says Mr. Nash, 'that Mr. Bishop was sufficiently careless, it is *fully believed* by all in this place, the enemies as well as the friends of missions, that he had no dishonest intention. —Both Samuel Spurr and the person who accompanied him in pursuit of Mr. Bishop, while here, expressed themselves to him and to others, **FULLY SATISFIED** that he had *no design* to take any whip but his own: that his doing it was *purely accidental*. But what Mr. Spurr's design was it seems not difficult to conjecture, when we are credibly informed, that after having gone seven miles on his return to Mass. he stated that he had been pursuing a missionary who had *stolen* a whip, and had recovered of him 12 dollars. As to Mr. Bishop's remaining here longer the next morning than he had proposed, it was that he might have an opportunity to see the men who had pursued him, after their feelings had time to cool, and to satisfy them that he had not intended to do them an injury: this delayed him so long that he concluded to take breakfast before he went on his way.' Mr. Nash concludes his letter by expressing his conviction that the cause of truth and righteousness will never be injured by such attacks as this.

One remark in conclusion.—What are we compelled to infer from the conduct of a person, who, like the editor of the Magazine, could, after his introductory remarks, insert in his paper an anonymous communication, implicating so deeply the character of a Missionary of the cross, without making one attempt to ascertain the truth or falsity of the statement it contained?—Will any one even suppose that he meant as he said? If he did, gladly will he embrace the opportunity now offered him, of correcting the errors to which he has given publicity.

On reading the above, not knowing whether the editors of the Magazine would be favored with this number of the Gazette, we felt it our duty to enter into an examination of the affair, as our brethren were accused of hypocrisy in expressing a regret which they did not feel, on being called upon to publish the transactions of Mr. Bishop. We also considered Mr. Spurr charged with inconsistency and impropriety of conduct, by Mr. Nash, and that he ought in justice to have an opportunity to defend himself. Consequently, a letter was written to Mr. Spurr, in which the extract of Mr. Nash's letter was transcribed—and certain questions asked which were immediately answered. Mr. Spurr fully denies Mr. Nash's statements in justification of Mr. B. We are well aware that with some minds Mr. N's declaration will be considered as most entitled to credit, merely on account of his being a clergyman. We leave it with our readers to determine on this point as to which of the gentlemen is most entitled to credit, after perusing the two letters, and weighing the various circumstances in an impartial balance. We can assure them, that Mr. Spurr is a young gentleman whose rank and situation in life would not suffer him to sport with his character by telling a falsehood, nor can we discover any particular motive he could have in propagating a story respecting Mr. B. which was not true.

CHARLTON, MARCH, 5th, 1823.

Rev. Sir,—The letter you wrote my brother in relation to Bishop the Missionary, I have perused.—And as I am the person, as appears by your extract from Mr. Nash's letter published in the "Norwalk Gazette," whom Mr. N.

is willing to stigmatise in order to save his brother Bishop; I will endeavor to answer your enquiries as satisfactorily as possible.

It is true Bishop said at Mr. Nash's in the evening, that the mistake was made by reason of his baggage being removed to the room from which the whip was taken. As I was not in the house while Bishop was here, I did not contradict him, but on enquiry after my return home, I ascertained that when Bishop and his wife stopped at our house, they were shown into the front room where their baggage was laid, and in which, they took off their cloaks and laid them on the table, where his whip was left.

As it was very pleasant there was no fire in the room. After sitting a short time, Mrs. Bishop wishing to sit by the fire, was shown into the room from which the whip was taken. She took off her coat to mend it, went into the room where their baggage was, brought back with her her work basket, and that was the only article of their baggage that was removed from the room where it was first placed.

In the evening at Mr. Nash's, Bishop paid me Ten Dollars, went with me to the Tavern and directed the landlord to charge our bill to him. Next morning when I saw him, I had but little conversation with him. After the compliments of the morning, he said, he was very sorry for his mistake, it was very unfortunate. I answered it was, it had made me a great deal of trouble and I feared (as the wind was blowing pretty cold from the east) I should have a storm to ride home in. He then asked me if I was satisfied with what he had paid me. I told him if he paid the landlord as he had agreed, I should be satisfied. But that I ever expressed myself "**FULLY SATISFIED**" that he had no design to take any whip but his own," either to Bishop, or any one else, is not true. On the contrary, I stated to him and others, that I thought it impossible for any person to make so great a mistake, and drive twenty miles without discovering it.

Mr. Nash says, it is false that Spurr's whip was loaded." I do not know what Mr. Nash would term a "loaded whip." I consider a loaded whip one that has lead in its but-end to increase its weight. The one Bishop took is of that kind and is as heavy as they usually are. Mr. Nash also says, Bishop remained "longer next morning than he had proposed, that he might have an opportunity to see the men who had pursued him after their feelings had time to cool." I have related the conversation between Bishop and myself. He did not ask me if I felt satisfied he had no intention to take any whip but his own; and he did not even speak to the gentleman with me in the morning.

Yours respectfully,

SAMUEL D. SPURR.

In the first Number, of the second Vol. of the Inquirer, we made a few remarks on strictures written by "SENEX" designed as a refutation of a sermon published by the Rev. H. Ballou of Boston from 2d Thess. 1st Chap. 7, 8, and 9, verses. Being unwilling to enter into a discussion with an anonymous writer, without knowing by what means his communication was made public, and whether the copy we had received could be relied on as genuine; we notified our correspondent that we should not take any further notice of the writings of "SENEX" unless we could obtain the requisite information.

We are informed that we may rely on the following facts. "SENEX" is an Episcopal clergyman much opposed to the doctrine of Universal Salvation; that the copy we have, was taken verbatim from the original in 'S's' own hand writing; and that his name can be produced if ever circumstances require it. Yielding to the repeated requests of our friends in the vicinity of "Senex" we now proceed to make further remarks on his strictures.

In the first No. we exposed the absurdity of the idea of an intermediate state, which "Senex" informed us was the

general opinion of the Episcopal church; and got up by him, to show the propriety of a day of general judgement, which is an absurdity, if the common opinion so long embraced be true (viz) that the state of man is fixed at death and that man immediately enters into a state of happiness or misery which is to be eternal.

Having, in his own opinion, established the point that there is an intermediate state on the authority of its being the general opinion or belief of the Episcopal church; he proceeds in his examination of Mr. Ballou's sermon. "The writer (i. e. Mr. B.) further observes in Page 6th that the opinion so long perpetuated by tradition, of what is termed the last judgment, the last day, the end of the world has no support in the scriptures. This doctrine is not found in the sacred oracles before me. The speaker knows what he says, and holds himself accountable to his hearers for every sentence." To this "Senex" makes the following reply. "The reader is requested to pay particular attention to the 24th of St. Matthew's Gospel. In which our blessed Lord is foretelling the destruction of the Temple and City of Jerusalem, the unheard of calamities, and astonishing signs and wonders that should precede and attend it; together with some allusions to the last judgment, of which the destruction of Jerusalem was but a faint representation."

So many men of Science and Literature have written on the 24th chapter of Matthew, and clearly shown, that the many signs and wonders expressed in it were to precede the destruction of Jerusalem, that the most zealous bigot is obliged to acknowledge it. But while they admit the primary application to that devoted City, yet they still insist upon its having an allusion to a future day of judgment. By what authority this allusion is made we know not. The reasons which have heretofore been offered are not satisfactory. To this allusion of "Senex" we oppose no less authority than that of Bishop Newton, who being an Episcopalian his opinion may have some weight. The Bishop in his lecture on the prophecy of the Saviour in the 24th of Matthew, part 4th observes "He" (Jesus) "proceeds to declare that the time of his coming was at no very great distance, and to shew that he had been speaking all this while of the destruction of Jerusalem, he affirms with his usual affirmation, verse 34th 'Verily I say unto you this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.' It is to me a wonder how any man can refer part of the foregoing discourse to the destruction of Jerusalem, and part to the end of the world, or any other distant event, when it is said so positively here in the conclusion, 'all these things shall be fulfilled in this generation.'"

"Senex" attempts to give a reason why he considers it as having an allusion to the day of judgment. He says, "at the 34th and 35th Verses" Jesus said "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all things be fulfilled: Heaven and Earth shall pass away but my word shall not pass away. In the next verse he (Jesus) says but of that day and hour knoweth no man no not the angels in heaven, but my Father only! Our blessed Saviour here in the 36th verse, seems to be speaking of an event very different from that of the destruction of the Temple and City of Jerusalem; or he contradicts himself. Because he has declared in the most positive manner, that the one should take place during the lives of the present generation: and of the other he as positively declares; that of that day and hour knoweth no man (not even he himself as man) no nor the angels in heaven, but the Father only."

Can it be possible that a man possessing literary acquirements as we presume "Senex" does, should be so blinded by prejudice as not to discover the weakness and absurdity of this conclusion; or, is there some cunning craftiness here, to deceive the ignorant and unreflecting. We are persuaded, that if any man had drawn such conclusions, in the presence of 'Senex' on any other subject,

he would have laughed at his simplicity. May not a person know, that an event will take place within thirty or forty years, and yet not know the day, nor the hour? And if he should declare, that the event would take place, within the number of years, but of the precise day and hour he was ignorant, would it necessarily follow that he was speaking of two particular circumstances; if not, that he contradicted himself? I will present 'Senex' with Bishop Newton's opinion on this text. "But still the exact time of this judgment was unknown to all creatures, verse 36, 'But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.' The word *OORA* is of larger signification than *hour*; and besides it seemeth somewhat improper to say. 'Of that day and hour knoweth no man;' for if the day was not known, certainly the hour was not, and it was superfluous to make such addition. I conceive therefore that the passage should be rendered, not 'of that day and hour knoweth no man,' but 'of that day and *season* knoweth no man,' as the word is frequently used in the best authors sacred and profane. It is true our Saviour declares 'all these things shall be fulfilled in this generation;' it is true the prophet Daniel hath given some intimation of the time in his famous prophecy of the seventy weeks: but though this great revolution was to happen towards the conclusion of seventy weeks or 490 years to be computed from a certain date that is not easy to be fixed; yet the particular *day*, the particular *season* in which it was to happen, might still remain a secret to men and angels: and our Saviour advised his disciples to pray that their flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day; the *day* not being known, they might pray that their flight be not on the *sabbath-day*; the *season* not being known, they might pray that their flight be not in the *winter*."

Thus we learn that Bishop Newton, who undoubtedly possessed as great intellectual powers, and scientific knowledge as "Senex," did not consider the Saviour as speaking of two events nor contradicting himself in referring to one event; and it is doubtful whether any other man but "S" would have made the discovery.

"Senex" proceeds. "In page 9th the writer" (Mr. Ballou) tells us that the doctrine of judging and rewarding men according to their works is the plain doctrine which Jesus preached, but let it be remembered, that he never put off the day of Judgment to a future state of existence." To refute this statement, "Senex" invites his readers "to examine 16 Chap. of Luke where they will find it recorded that Lazarus the beggar, and the rich man both died; the first was received by angels into Abraham's bosom, and the last was buried and in hell he lift up his eyes, &c." After relating the parable he says. "This is nothing but a Parable." Thus by one dash of the pen he has destroyed all he could possibly expect to gain by introducing the parable. "But says 'Senex' all the parables of our blessed Saviour mean something." This every person will be ready to acknowledge. "Abraham's bosom, and the flames of Hell appear to be very different situations." Most assuredly—& this any man of common sense would know. "And both of them took place at death." Ah indeed! Did not Senex declare, that 'this is nothing but a parable?' Yet he now insists upon its being a literal relation of facts. That there were really two men, and they died, one went to Abraham's bosom—the other to Hell.

The word "PARABLE" we have always understood, signified a "similitude," or, "a relation under which something else is figured." If this is the true definition of the word; as "Senex" says the parables of the Saviour always had some meaning; it is for him to find out what was the Saviour's meaning in this parable. If there were actually two men, the one rich the other poor, and they literally died; and one went into Abraham's bosom, because he was poor and wretched in this life, and the other went to a local place called HELL, merely because he was rich and enjoyed the good things of this life—then it is not a "PARABLE."



*SIMILITUDE—NOT relation under which something else is figured.*

But "Senex" says 'this is nothing but a PARABLE,' we are therefore much surprised that he should bring it forward in proof of men being rewarded or punished after death. Should "Senex" persist that the circumstances of the men, are real facts used as a parable or similitude, we ask him to inform us, if he really believes that Lazarus was actually carried into Abraham's bosom; and that, merely because he was poor and destitute in this life. "Senex" must be aware that no other reason is assigned. No moral holiness or piety on the part of the beggar is urged. If "S" believes that men will go to heaven or into Abraham's bosom because they endure poverty and wretchedness in this life, he must act differently from the clergy in general, or, he must act contrary to his faith for they are as fond of the pomp and splendor of this world, and love to fare sumptuously as ever the rich man did. He must also believe that the rich man went to *Hell* not for any immoral conduct, or open wickedness but solely on account of his being possessed of, and enjoying the good things of this world. In addition to this he must believe that the rich man was the natural descendant and son of Abraham; that there is a real gulf between Heaven and Hell; that these two places are so approximate that people can, not only see, but converse with each other; and that the rich man in Hell did actually possess those feelings of benevolence which produced the desire that his brethren in this world might be notified of their danger, and be saved from the misery he endured. If this is the case, then it is evident, (if the common opinion of the day be true,) that the feelings of the damned in hell are vastly superior to the feelings of those in heaven, that is, if benevolence is an ennobling virtue; for we have been taught that in heaven the saints will look down with satisfaction on the miseries of the damned in hell, however nearly related and feel their happiness increase, with the increasing wretchedness of those in hell; while according to the relation before us, the damned in hell possess all those feelings of Philanthropy which desire the salvation of others

(To be continued.)

A gentleman in Utica, (N. Y.) has requested us to give the name of the Widow lady residing in Vernon, who has been thrown into a state of insanity by the labors of Mr. Asahel Nettleton. This request is made, we are informed in consequence of some of the friends and admirers of Mr. N. in the vicinity of Utica, pronouncing the account to be false, and got up by the enemies of revivals, (and consequently of RELIGION) to destroy the pious labours of this man of God (so called) and to stop the progress of the work of the Lord,

The unfortunate woman's name is PAINE, and our only reason for not giving the name at first, was, our unwillingness to wound the feelings of those relatives, who are already sufficiently afflicted in the miseries of their friend. Should any person still doubt the account, if they will take the trouble of a journey to the town of Vernon, in the county of Hartford, and State of Connecticut, they can have ocular demonstration of its truth. Beholding a poor miserable being, enduring all the horrors of confirmed delirium produced by blind fanaticism, and the cunning craftiness of a zealous enthusiast; and if they should desire further information as to the effects of Mr. N's labors, they may visit the family of the unfortunate Mr. Fuller, in the town of Somers, who was a convert of his, and who in a state of mental derangement, attempted to kill his wife by beating her to death, and his child by cutting its throat.

Our friends may rest assured, that no circumstance, like the one alluded to, will ever appear as an original article in the "Religious Inquirer," unless we are fully persuaded of its truth and have the means in our power of proving the fact.—And should names be withheld, it will be from motives of delicacy towards those concerned.

*From the (Buffalo) Gospel Advocate.*

Died, at Niagara, on the 29th Jan. last, Mr. Peregrine W. Bush, late of Pittsfield, Mass. aged 34 years; after enduring the most distressing and dispiriting effects of an incurable pulmonary complaint for something more than a year.

Although a stranger in this country, Mr. Bush was respected as a citizen; he was a kind and affectionate husband and father, and has left a wife and two children, to lament so untimely a bereavement of their best earthly friend. His illness was of that nature that did not produce sudden dissolution, but gave him an opportunity, coolly to reflect upon the termination of his earthly hopes and expectations; and to prepare his mind to meet without consternation, the important crisis that awaited him.

On the morning of his death, we were called to see him; he retained his intellectual faculties to the last: commending his spirit to Almighty God, he died calm and tranquil; possessing an unshaken belief in the doctrine of universal happiness and holiness; displaying a firmness and magnanimity of soul, becoming the saint and philosopher: in full reliance on divine protection—at the same time furnishing a pleasing proof of the fallacy, and a complete confutation of that truly peculiar idea, that no one can approach their dissolution, with peace and calmness, in belief of the doctrine which he professed.

A few minutes before his death, he observed, "I am now going to test the realities of another world, the world of spirits, and only wish that the curtain may drop, and this earthly scene be closed; but I would not be impatient; Thy will, O God, be done." Not a sigh or a groan escaped him—at his departure he sunk, peacefully, into the arms of death; and we humbly hope, that his spirit, ransomed from sin, by the Saviour of the whole world, now reaps congenial joys in the mansions of eternal rest.

A. THOMAS.  
P. WHITNEY.

Niagara Falls, Feb. 2, 1823.

*From the (Boston) Universalist Magazine.*

A VIEW OF GOD AND HEAVEN,

By Dr. Emmons, the celebrated fatalist of Franklin, (Mass.)

"If a realizing sense of the sovereignty of God leads his friends to submit to it in this world, then we must suppose, that it will lead them to submit to it in the world to come. Divine sovereignty is as unlimited in duration as in extent. It will be displayed in time to come, as it has been in time past, and it will be far more clearly displayed when time shall be no more. In a future state it will be seen, not only in afflicting good and bad men while passing through life; but in forming their diametrically opposite characters, and fitting them for their diametrically different conditions through eternity. Then all the objects of divine election, and of divine reprobation, will appear together, and in the most striking contrast. Thus it will be seen, that one parent was taken and another left, one child taken and another left, one friend taken and another left. Then God will confer everlasting good upon one person, and inflict everlasting evil upon another. Then it will appear, that all the dispensations of providence in this world are designed to lay, and did actually lay a foundation for endless joy, and endless sorrow. And who can doubt whether it will not be as trying to a parent, to see a child die an eternal as a temporal death; or as trying to a child, to see a parent die an eternal as a temporal death; or as trying to a husband, to see a wife die an eternal as a temporal death; or as trying to a wife, to see a husband die an eternal as a temporal death; or as trying to a friend, to see a friend die an eternal as a temporal death. The final separation of the wicked from the righteous, will excite unspeakably higher sensibility in their pious hearts, than any separation, bereavement, or affliction ever did, while they were passing through the fiery trials of their probationary states; and in this case

it is certain, that their sensibility must be either submission, or unsubmission. It must not, and it cannot be unsubmission; but it must be, and it will be perfectly submission. The bright and brightening display of divine sovereignty, will perpetually awaken and increase their love to it, and sweetly constrain them to sing, 'Amen, Alleluia,' while they are continually beholding 'the smoke of the torments of the damned ascending for ever and ever.' The friends of God will be cordially and unreservedly submissive to his sovereignty, as long as they and he shall exist.

If this be God's true character, and if this be a just representation of his capricious choice, and of the condition of the saints in the future world, no one can rejoice that he reigns, feel satisfied with his partiality, or desire a heaven of agony, in witnessing eternal death. This makes God more inexorable than the heathen Jupiter, and gives him a cruelty of purpose, at which all the gods of the Pantheon would recoil in horror. "I could sooner be a Turk, a Deist, yet an Atheist than I could believe this. For it is less absurd to deny the very being of God, than to make him an Almighty tyrant." The above view of God's sovereignty is so totally opposed by scripture and reason, that both must be thrown away to adopt it.

HERMES.

## ANOTHER CONVERSION.

We learn from Albany, N. Y. that the Rev. ASHAEL DAVIS, an Episcopal clergyman, and one of the chaplains in the Legislature, has of late been led to believe in the "UNITY OF GOD, and in the final holiness and happiness of all mankind;" in consequence of which, he has resigned his place and the duties of the ministry in the Episcopal church. May the Lord strengthen his hands and encourage his heart; and speedily open a door for his more useful labours.

Phil. Univ. Mag.

## QUERY.

Why should not ministers, of different sentiments exchange, and preach to each other's congregations? Will each one say, my doctrine is the truth, the doctrines which other's preach are erroneous? Be it so, then why not go and preach the truth to those congregations which are in the habit of hearing error? Will each one say, I am willing to preach truth to other congregations, but am not willing to have error preached to mine: therefore I cannot exchange? But, dear brethren, if you have enlightened your congregations with the clear lamp of truth, you need not fear that darkness will put out your light.—*Universalist Magazine.*

## ANOTHER VICTIM.

To the Doctrines of Endless Torture.

A young man, named John Brown, near Morristown, (N. J.) recently became the happy subject of conversion, under the preaching of the Rev. Mr. Ford, and his mind harrowed with the belief of endless torments for sinners in a future world.—This young man's sincerity proved his destruction. The tremendous doctrine of the modern Moloch, was more than he could bear. *Insanity and despair* was the consequence of Mr. Ford's gospel! Instead of breathing "peace and good will to men," it breathed "fire-brands, arrows and death." The distracted subject of this conversion attempted to seek for relief in suicide; but was prevented! "Death," however "the friend to the wretch whom every friend forsakes," kindly came to his aid; and he left, in despair, a world, where the pretended gospel of life and peace is heard, thundering anathemas, war and death.—*Gospel Herald.*

## NOTICE.

Rev. R. CARRIQUE will preach in Granby on the 5th Sabbath of this Month, in what is called "Salmon Brook Parish."

## POETRY.

## MISSIONS.

We have in our possession a small manuscript *Poem* entitled "*Missions*," which is expected soon to be published. Its design is to aid in the laudable efforts which are now making by the friends of truth to counteract the mission-mania which has so extensively prevailed throughout our country, and contributes so largely to the influence of the clergy. We have not examined it sufficiently to judge of its merits, but so far as we are enabled to form an opinion on the subject, think it will be well received. The design and object of it cannot fail of recommending it to all honest inquirers after truth who have candidly examined the subject of which it treats. We subjoin an extract from the *Poem*, and may hereafter gratify our readers with further extracts.

"How long since light in its progressive way  
Shone o'er the darkness of that gloomy day?  
Even now the task quite difficult is found  
To quit the faith which our forefathers bound  
From stale tradition, prejudice, so hard  
Our minds to unfetter and our course to guard  
So strong the current, oral or from books  
It warps our reason and deforms our looks.

Judah grew old, was honest all would say  
Eat, drank and talked and laboured every day }  
And all was done just in his father's way!  
The coat he wore in colour, cut and stuff  
If like his father's Judah thought enough  
His breeches too the same shaped buttons wore  
That graced his grandsires centuries before  
But when the fashion asked more cloth and stitches  
And stretched to Pantaloon's the knee-bound breeches  
And buckled up suspenders on his boys  
This Judah cried, our liberties destroys!  
Such proud extravagance in great and small  
If not discountenanced will undo us all!  
His round of duties and of business too  
No change admitted, no improvement knew  
The same old fashioned tools his farm to till  
The same his sheep, his swine and even his swill,  
One horse he kept for saddle use alone  
Five generations the same breed had known  
A pillion too his ambling palfrey bore  
His lady's seat when Judah rode before  
Which oft he did to Church with good intent  
And once a pilgrimage to Salem went.

The books he read & thought would almost save him  
Were none but those his pious father gave him,  
Except where Mission tracts and books of rules  
Fresh from the press, were seen for Sunday Schools  
Rang'd on his shelf; with these, tho' not so sound  
Were Bunyan's works, and Saybrook Platform found  
The first he sung to tones 'twould make one start  
The last he said,—he knew it all by heart,  
Just what was taught him first, he dares to read  
Not for the world, would Judah change his creed  
Even now since human creeds are running low  
And men their faith by works begin to show  
Judah is much disturbed, and tells the town  
All true religion fast is coming down.  
But worse than this—his son to Cambridge sent  
Has quit the ground on which his fathers went  
Studied Theology with zeal and care  
But turned from doctor Wood to doctor WARE."

PRINTED BY J. T. BEEBE, SEMI-MONTHLY,  
FOR THE PROPRIETORS.

A FEW RODS SOUTH OF THE LITTLE BRIDGE,  
AT ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM—PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.